

Interview with Roswell T. "Bud" Harris, Oct. 26, 1986

Allen: Bud, when did you first come to what was then the Junior College?

Bud: In September of 1946.

Allen: As a freshman.

Bud: As a freshman, yes.

Allen: And what were you studying then?

Bud: At that time, my major was Chemistry but I later changed to Sociology.

Allen: Why was that?

Bud: I really didn't like Chemistry after I got into it and I just switched majors in my Sophomore year.

Allen: So you came in the fall of '46 which meant you were there at the time that everything began to grow. The veterans who were beginning to come back and a few months later I arrived. As a matter of fact you were in the first class I taught.

Bud: That's right.

Allen: Do you remember where we met?

Bud: In the basement of Marina Hall. The coffee cans were ashtrays.

Allen: Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays at 8:00. And I don't remember who else was in that class, do you?

Bud: There were about seventeen or eighteen in the class. Moe (?) McDonnell was one, Kay Roach, Kay Dewitt, Arthur Coleman, Tubby Newcomb. The usual crowd that we had because it was the only one that we could fit into our schedule.

Allen: O.K. Tell us a little bit about the Junior College in '46 and early '47.

Bud: Well, I'm sure you already know it was located on Fairfield Avenue. It consisted of one academic building and in that building were all the classrooms, the offices, the snack bar, everything rolled into one compact building. Classes were used at 7:00 in the morning really until about 10:00 at night. They had a couple of dormitories and they had a little theatre out back on

Fremont Street.

Allen: That was the former garage.

Bud: The former garage. That was the sum total physical plant. We used the Klein Memorial as an auditorium. Used Seaside Park for sporting events or activities. It was basically a commuting school, most of the people lived off campus because of the very limited facilities. There were a couple houses, old houses on the corner of Norman and Fairfield that had been converted into dormitories but they probably only housed about ten girls in each one, they were strictly only for female residents, there were no residence for men at all. Most of them lived in the neighborhood really, within almost walking distance of the campus, although at that time too, the predominance of the student body was made up of local people. There weren't very many people who were commuters.

Allen: Do you know why so many veterans started coming?

Bud: I think again because of the quick end of the war. They didn't have time to send out applications and go through the process of registration and applications that a lot of colleges so the Junior College, at that time, had an excellent reputation and the placement of students who graduated from the Junior College was very, very good to get into any of the top schools in the country. So I think that a lot of people opted, because it was available, because registration was open, and you could get in with relatively simple process. Everything was right there for you and you could go to your high school and get it and you could get whatever you needed and get registered in a hurry.

Allen: We also started accelerated classes for Nov., Feb., and March and I think taking in quite a few people that way. Now Mr. Cortright was president emeritus at this time, did you know him, did you get to see him?

Bud: He was around campus and we would pass and chat and that sort of thing, but really not in any great detail.

Allen: But you didn't know him very well at all.

Bud: No.

Allen: Did you get to know Jim Halsey?

Bud: Oh yes.

Allen: Tell us about Jim Halsey.

Bud: Jim was probably one of the most beautiful, idealistic men I've ever met. I always said that Jim had the dreams and Henry

Littlefield put the wheels underneath that made it go. Jim envisioned the university as it became in the '60s and '70s. He went from door to door, literally, with his hat in his hand begging the local business men to support the university and Henry did too, but basically it was Jim's mission to sell the university to the community. He did an excellent job, he really did. Tireless, I don't think that Jim or Julia ever turned down an invitation to go anywhere, because given the opportunity to talk about the Junior College or the University to be, and they just, maybe they figured, not large in stature, but he was a very imposing man. When you were in his presence you had a certain aura of respect for the man.

Allen: Henry Littlefield?

Bud: Henry was the "toughie". Henry was the one who made the decision that it was either it was gonna fly or it wasn't gonna fly, and when you went up to Henry with a proposal of any kind, he would come out of his office with an answer. It was either going to work or it wasn't going to work and if he thought it wasn't going to work, the answer was "no". And a lot of times, it was "no", I think the only time we pestered him was when we tried to get football at the university.

Allen: Alright, you mentioned that, let's talk about how we got football.

Bud: We went out on strike. The student body just walked out of classes and went over and sat down at the Klein Memorial and Halsey and Littlefield came over and we told them we weren't going to get out until they told us we were going to have a football team the next fall. And so they walked out and about four or five hours later they came back in and said that they had decided we would have a football team at UB. So the coach was hired, they went out and they recruited almost en masse the Harding High school graduating class that year who were the state champions and that was the beginning of football at UB.

Allen: Now, who were the leaders in this movement? In your recollection?

Bud: Ev Matson, John Cox, Bob Donaldson, Bruce Webster,

Allen: That's not the coach.

Bud: No.

Allen: Harold Beardsworth?

Bud: Hal was one of the quiet ones behind it, but Hal was proud of it but the leadership really was the student leaders on campus. They were the ones who took (?) John Saccone, Ed Kost,

they had people from all over. A lot of guys that got involved in it too.

Allen: Tell me, how did the students support it, the team after it got started?

Bud: Very well. The games were played at Candlelight Stadium, up in the East End of Bridgeport, I guess. It was very, very well supported. It was the thing to do on a Saturday night, go to the football games or Saturday afternoon.

Allen: Do you remember the game that it was so foggy that we couldn't see what was going on down at the other end of the field?

Bud: I don't remember that one, but I remember our going to Wilkes College in Wilkesborough, Pa. At that time Wilkesborough did not have a very good reputation, so Henry Littlefield wouldn't let the team or the cheerleaders, and I was a cheerleader at that time, stay in Wilkesborough. We had to stay in Stroudsburg and that was really a foggy game. We won it by the quarterback running back into a fog bank and three running backs went back there with him and they all came out of the fog bank and nobody knew who had the ball.

Allen: How was Gladchuck as a coach, he didn't stay very long.

Bud: I don't think he was really ready to coach at that time. I think he was still in the mind set of being a player. And he was a good, basic coach. I don't think he really knew the fundamentals of the game and could impart the fundamentals to his players. He knew them to work them out on the field himself, but he didn't know how to teach it.

Allen: While we're on the subject of football, you mentioned John Cox's name. Let's talk about John.

Bud: What do you want to know about him?

Bud: Well, tell me about your remberances of him. I know he was a very, very good friend of yours, and mine, and of everybody else. Let's cover John as a student and then when he came back to the university.

Bud: As a student, he was very concerned about the university. He was dedicated to the university, as a matter of fact, John was the first president of the student council and it was during his term as president of the student council that the charter for the University of Bridgeport was signed. He and Jackie Keefe, Jim Halsey and Henry Littlefield went up to Hartford and Gov. McConahy signed the proclamation.

Allen: Oh, that was Gladys Kost.

Bud: Gladys was there too.

Allen: Right and Cortright was in the picture as well. I just looked at that picture the other day.

Bud: And then John was also president of Theta Sigma fraternity. He was involved in just about every activity at the university that could be. He was in the political relations forum, he was president of that, he was president of just about everything. As a student, he was an average student. He could have been a good student, but he spent too much of his time on other activities and so he assumed the leadership mantle, and in doing so I think he sacrificed part of the academics. He always dreamed of becoming a lawyer, never realized it, but he compensated in many ways for it. That's as a student.

When he got out, he went to work, I believe his first job was working with GE and he worked in the Personnel Department there and he went from there to Dresser Industries and from Dresser he went to Unimation in Danbury, and then came to the University in 1966 as the Director of Alumni Relations. It's funny because he and I had interviewed for the job, and he hadn't interviewed for that job really, but he and I were in contention to come back to the University at that time, and it had been pretty well arranged that I was coming back. I had met with Mr. Halsey, President Halsey, Chancellor Halsey, a couple of times and he had recommended that I take the position. And when he called me in one day and said they wanted to bring John back to the university and get him now, and he was going to, he asked if it would be alright with me if he was named Director of Alumni Relations for an interim time, and that once he was moved on, once the slot opened up for him to take over in development that I would come as the Alumni Director and this is what happened.

Then, let's see, John, when I moved back into the area, after I graduated in 1950, I went into the service and then traveled around a bit. Was working in Baltimore up until 1955, came back to the area in 1955. John was active in the Alumni Association at that time. He got me active in the alumni association and he was president of the Alumni Association, I believe, at that particular time. He got me back on the Board of Directors of the Alumni and again, just manifested his continued interest in the university all the way through. I don't think ever left the university from 1946 until his untimely passing. It was always part of his life.

Allen: Very, very much so. I found, I don't whether you know anything about this or not, Bud, I found that just before he came back as Alumni Director, he was a candidate for the Alumni Board of Trustees spot.

Bud: He'd already been on it.

Allen: He was never on the Board of Trustees, I beg your pardon, I've got to double check that.

Bud: Because he was on from 1960 to 1964, I think.

Allen: I know what it was. After he finished that, he was a candidate for election to the Board and then was not picked up which would have wiped out his-.

Bud: But they wanted him to come back and you know Halsey and Littlefield both wanted him to come back and work for the university full time. They didn't want him as a trustee, they wanted him as an employee. This is why I say that there was no position available at the time in 1966 when they wanted him to come on the staff, so Bill Kennedy, who at that time was the Alumni Relations Director, had decided to go up to Sacred Heart so they brought John in.

Allen: I've heard stories about Bill Kennedy that he was instrumental in losing the names and addresses of a lot of alumni. Do you know about that?

Bud: Yes.

Allen: What's the story on that?

Bud: Bill sent out a postal card to all the, double sided postal card, to all the alumni stating that if they wanted to remain on the rolls of the alumni association, to send the card back with their current address and update and those that didn't, he just wiped them off. And usually, in a mass mailing, you only get about a four or five percent return anyway, so we spent many years resurrecting files. Carried on into John's term and carried on into my term. As a matter of fact there is still some who are lost.

Allen: Still lost, yes. It's a darn shame, isn't it? Who approved that, incidentally? That mailing?

Bud: I really don;t know.

Allen: Alright, let's go back to the old '40s and some of the other people there. Did you have Doc Ropp in class as an instructor?

Bud: No. I had Harry Wechter.

Allen: O.K. Harry was quite a character.

Bud: He sure was.

Allen: Tell us a little bit about Harry.

Bud: Harry was the penultimate chemist. He couldn't relate on many other levels, really. I say that, he's the father of ten children, but as far as the students were concerned, he was a very, he was a martinet. He didn't like to repeat things when he said them, you were supposed to catch them the first time around, he didn't like to repeat anything, and he was an excellent teacher. He certainly knew his subject, there was no question about that, he was excellent teacher, but he just demanded a level of excellence that many students couldn't perform to, and this caused frustrations on his part as well as on the student's part.

Allen: Alright another administrator at that time was Harry Becker. Did you know him very well?

Bud: Not too well, no. I knew him but again not very well.

Allen: And another administrator at this time was Harry Kendall.

Bud: Yes.

Allen: Did you know Harry very well.

Bud: Oh yes, real well.

Allen: Tell us about Harry. I can tell you a lot of stories but I would like to get some others.

Bud: Affable, lovable, a little roly poly character that you immediately took to. He had a very warm personality. He loved students and spent a lot of time with them. As a counselor as a friend, as a shoulder when you needed somebody to lean on, he was there, A very dependable man. He really was.

Allen: Did you ever go to any of the dances that he, square dances that he called?

Bud: No I wasn't into square dancing. I was, that was not my particular fun.

Allen: We both advised ADO and they were looking for something to do, so he said, "I'll tell you, if you have a square dance, I'll call", and they said, "we don't know how", and Harry said, "I'll teach you". Well, he taught them and they loved it and we had all kinds of square dances and some great parties. John Sherry was another character.

Bud: John was one of a kind.

Allen: Do you have stories about John?

Bud: Well, first, John came from (?)City, Pennsylvania (?) and when John got out of college, the first person he called was my uncle, who was superintendent of schools in (?)City, Pennsylvania. So John and I had a little connection. And used to see John a lot. After he got out of class, he never got out before nine or ten o'clock at night. He used to go to a little newsstand down on the corner of Fairfield and Broad streets. And (?) to go down there and pick up a paper at that time and I drive down as I only lived two blocks away and John lived out in Black Rock. So I would invariably ask John if he wanted a ride home. Whether it was raining, snowing or a nice night. John would always say, no. And I asked him why he didn't want a ride home and he said, "you upset the balance of things", and I said, "what do you mean I upset the balance of things?" and he said, "don't you understand," he said, "I get on the bus, I know the driver", he said, "we got things to talk about and we've got numbers to play, we've got horses to bet on and everything else, and I don't want you screwing it up. Don't ask to drive me home anymore."

Allen: I can just see him talking out of the corner of his mouth with a cigar in it. John Sherry and Harry Wechter always were the source of an awful lot of information.

Bud: Yes. But again they had, you know, the Harry, some were more academic and not really putting them down, but Harry related to the very bright student, very well, he really did and they shared a lot with him. John on the other hand was one of the gang and John could walk up to anyone and talk to anyone and everything else and that was very, very easy. And yes, I think between the two of them, and there were a couple of others too

Allen: This is a source of information? I know that I've seen John, who ten minutes after a Dean's Council, told me what went on in the Dean's Council.

Bud: No, you can't be privy to that type of information. They just said (?)

Allen: Yes I know and I've never figured out what it was.

Bud: (?) of the individual are so wide spread, like tentacles going up like some wild growing plant. You just can't, you know, cut one off and two more appear, so I'm sure their sources probably came from different people at different times.

Allen: Well I used to have at those times some pretty good sources too.

Bud: We all did.

Allen: We had to.

Bud: You had to stay one jump ahead. You mentioned before and I digressed, and this is telling tales of of school, but it is funny. When Fran Ferri first came down from North Eastern University to take over and build the Fones School of Dental Hygiene. We were in the snack bar on Fairfield Avenue, and let's say the snack bar on Fairfield was a very intimate place. Between classes there were 600 bodies in a room that was equipped to hold about 200, so we got real close. And I thought Fran was a student then because she was a pretty, young thing, and we got to chatting, and so she at the of the chat she invited me up to her office, and I thought that was rather strange that a student had an office, and then I found out who she was. Well, a couple of months after (?) and talked with Fran and I went in one day and she handed me a post card, and I the guy who was to be her husband, Fran Dolan and I were pretty good friends. I had Fran in class. And she handed me this post card and it was from the Quota Club of Bridgeport and it was addressed to Miss Frances Ferri, Director of the Fones School of Dental Hygiene, and on the reverse side of it was a question which was asked by the Quota Club to fill out and send back, and the question was, "Have you had your quota of intercourse this month?" I think from the time that Fran got that post card in 1948 or 49, until she left the University, every time I saw her I would ask her the question.

Allen: She did quite a job in getting dental hygiene under way along with Dr. Strang. We haven't talked about Earl Bigsbee, did you know him very well?

Bud: I knew Earl better in later times when I came back as the Alumni Relations Director than I did in the early days. Dean Ropp was the administrator, and any problem or question you had was resolved in Dean Ropp's office.

Allen: Under your faculty characters here, you have Mr. Fran Dolan, Dr. Fran.

Bud: Well, Fran was again a neat person. He could move from the professorial role to the (?) role, to the friend. He was a very caring individual and a lot of times, particularly with the brothers of Theta Sigma. He was very close to them and we got to know him real well.

Allen: And, of course, you had Al Dickason. You got to know Al quite well.

Bud: Oh yes, through Campus Productions. You didn't ask about Dean Scurr.

Allen: Yes, did you know her?

Bud: Oh yes. It was quoted in a book the year after I graduated to something to the effect that she would have been (?) and you could go back and take it over again. She was a beautiful lady, she really was. I would like to tell this story. I had been a corpsman in the Navy and had done some work with (?) patients, psychiatric patients and we had a couple of catatonics and we were reading in Dean Scurr's class about David and Solomon and how David would play his lyre and Solomon would go into a trance, and I suggested that Solomon might have been a catatonic and that there was a certain note in the lute of the lyre that triggered this into Solomon's brain, and it was a comic, that's all it was really. About six weeks later in class, Dean Scurr asked me if I would have time to visit her in her office, and so trembling at this point, that I said I would and we set up a meeting at a convenient time and I went up, and she had books piled on the floor about three feet high and stacks of three or four books. She had researched this for six weeks, and she told me that Solomon was not a catatonic. This impressed me.

Allen: I have a number of delightful stories about her and this will add to it. You had Joe Shaefer down as one of the faculty characters.

Bud: I don't know how to describe Doc, and everybody called him Doc Shaefer. He was a bon vivant. He was a playboy. He was a teacher that was loved by every student who had him, I think. He was, had a couple of bad habits, but Doc was just a very very special person and lot of people (?), he really was. He was totally fair. You could go out and drink with him all night long and he was best buddy, but the next day in class, you'd better have all the answers (?) or else you'd get shot. He didn't play favorites.

Allen: He hated Roucek, too.

Bud: Even Roucek hated Roucek.

Allen: Tell us about Roucek.

Bud: I worked for him for two years. I could probably tell you more about Joe than anyone. Joe was (?) He used students as doormats. He was totally unfair in many ways in his testing procedures and everything else. But he was a good man. He was the head of the Political Science Department, and he demanded things done his way. For instance, when you did a term paper for Joe Roucek, you didn't do it in the usual way that you would do a term paper for you. You put footnotes at the bottom of the page but (?) Joe was going to read the stuff, he wanted it so that he could just clip it out and put in whatever he wanted and the editors would publish the way it was and whatever page it come on on, there it was, but he was a very tough man. He wasn't liked

by anybody, I don;t think. The one thing the department, the Sociology Department really liked, the one guy that was really liked was Bob Mayhew, and the students rallied around him. We also had, I think, the first Black professor.

Allen: Wright.

Bud: Wright.

Allen: Pratt was the first Black. But he was in foreign languages. And then Art Wright.

Bud: And Roucek was really a paradox. He could be a very caring individual at one moment with one student, but then he was ruthless with another. He wasn't well liked.

Allen: What was the basis of the Sociology Colloquium, how did it get started?

Bud: Well, Bridgeport is a unique environment. Probably no where in this area, or even in this part of the country, do you find a more heterogeneous mix of people than you will in the Bridgeport area and the Sociology Colloquium basically did a study on the cultures of the various groups. This was the origin of it. He would go out, he would go out to church halls, and the people of the group whether they were Slovak or Hungarian or Italian, would have a little dinner, and then have a display of the artifacts of their country, or they would have lectures or slide shows or movies about the country. We got to know the particular culture from which they came. For instance one of the ones that I remember quite clearly, is Francesca Lodge, Gov. Lodge's wife who was Italian, and she brought a collection of dolls with the costumes of the various provinces of Italy. And explained the nuances of each one. Very, very interesting, it really was, but Joe, again Bridgeport was such a hodge-podge of ethnic backgrounds, it was a good learning experience.

Allen: You also have Marge Ousterhoudt down as a faculty character.

Bud: Marge was -

Allen: She had been a student here before.

Bud: She was in student personnel and she was, I don;t say undisciplined but she was sort of-

Allen: Free spirit.

Bud: Free spirit, off the wall type of individual and had a mouth as big as a barn door, and enjoyed, she enjoyed being with students and worked for students.

Allen: What made her a character?

Bud: She never knew which side she was on. She never knew when she was an administrator or a student, and so we were playing guessing games all the time, and you tried to finesse her and generally speaking, you could.

Allen: O.k. going back to your notes which are very helpful, you had the required convocations. Before, I've forgotten the exact timing, but about the time you came, there were the required weekly convocations, and the veterans kicked up their heels and got rid of those and then we went to four a year which were required and later became 12 over two years.

Bud: Well, I think actually three convocations a semester, three or four a semester. You add it to 22. You got a card which you had to fill out and turn it in for full credit.

Allen: Do you know who ran those at that time?

Bud: I think you were part of it.

Allen: I had that job for a long time. And you mention dress codes too. Throughout much of this period there was a dress code, what was it?

Bud: Well, going to class, again, was less stringent than other areas, but you had to be presentable. You didn't wear, most of the GI's wore part of their uniforms as you well know, and you were expected, ~~there was no cut off shorts, no torn clothes.~~ Girls could wear slacks but not the tight fitting slacks. They were pretty strict about it, they really were.

Allen: Do you remember in the summer time when the signal to change uniforms to summer uniforms, was Doc Ropp going into a short sleeve shirt, and then the rest of us did. And there was the time too, there were a number of us who wore Bermuda shorts.

Bud: That was usually on Saturday morning.

Allen: Well some of us did it even more.

Bud: You taught in Marina basement, you used to do that but over in Fones, you didn't get away with it.

Allen: And I remember also, Marie Jaeger raising quite a fuss because one of the faculty, Austin Chapman, wore a ~T~ shirt without an undershirt underneath and she could see the hair on his chest. That bothered her. Did you know Austin Chapman very well?

Bud: He was a student when I was there.

Allen: He was in my class too, along with his wife. We have a delightful story between us about the day that a motorcycle back-fired outside of class, and as I came up off the floor, half the class, the veterans, came up. The non veterans didn't know what was going on.

Bud: One of the students, some, I enjoyed being around very much was Rosa Racamatta. She's from New Jersey and Rosa stood about four or five feet five. Very mild, slight build and she's now, she was an English Lit. Major, she's now head of the English Department. I think at William Patterson College down in New Jersey, and one day a guy got (?) and Rosa told him, you better not do it and he was about six foot two, six foot three, and he said why Rosa, what are you going to do? and she said, you'll find out if you keep it up. He kept it up and a few minutes later he went sailing through the air. Rosa taught Judo to marines going overseas.

Allen: That's delightful.

Bud: That's another thing, we had a lot of ex service women there too.

Allen: Yes, we did.

Bud: Nancy Holiday was Al Wolff's secretary and she was, I believe an ex Wave.

~~Allen: Doris May was too. There were a lot of social activities going on.~~

Bud: Too many.

Allen: Why.

Bud: I think there would have been better students if there was less of a social life.

Allen: We began to develop as we became a university, all the trappings of the rah, rah college spirit. Football team, basketball team, fraternities and sororities and dances. We elected queens, freshman, homecoming, snowflake, sweetheart, Wistaria. Wistaria had been around for quite a while. When did that die out, do you know?

Bud: When did it die out?

Allen: When and why?

Bud: I think it was again the year of the protest in the late

60's. Took fraternities away, took student activities that were not these things to do anymore. You got into a little(?) and basically it went away. Why? again protest.

Allen: And a man was elected the last homecoming queen, that helped. And of course you mention Al Wolff who was the kissing dean. For the benefit of the record here, how did he get that title?

Bud: I think Student personnel, it was also his job to announce who the queen was. (?) election, well some were study body elections and others were handled by judges, who elected the queen and Al announced and he had to hand a bouquet of flowers and kissing them. He became the kissing dean.

Allen: You mentioned a lot of the big name bands that we had at various times. Where did we hold these dances?

Bud: The Ritz Ballroom.

Allen: The Ritz Ballroom, right, which was a stop on the big band circuit. You mentioned Charlie Barnett, Tony Pastor, Rosemary Clooney.

Bud: There were a lot of them really and I'd have to go back. Vaughn Monroe was in one time. We also had Harry James, all the big named bands at one time.

Allen: We turned down getting Harry Bellefonte at one time because he wasn't known. This was before he became famous and

Bud: I think it is well know for instance that Diana Ross and the Supremes and the Temptations were at UB before they became famous, but remember Irv Arthur?

Allen: Irv Arthur, sound, rings a bell.

Bud: His name was really Irv Codman but for business reasons he used his middle name as his last name, but he was Vice President of a big promotion company in New York, and these were some of his clients and he made arrangements that he would send all these groups up to UB prior to, when they were just coming up.

Allen: Let's move along here to some of your other notes. We had for football a marching band and the Bridgettes. What were the Bridgettes?

Bud: The Bridgettes were 36 gals in purple uniforms and white boots and they were a precision drill team.

Allen: And the band was a pretty good band at that time. How big was it, do you recall?

Bud: It was about 30 or 40 pieces, depending on who was involved on that particular night.

Allen: And you have as the first majorettes Marge Cicero and Beverley Hough. I remember Marge Cicero, Beverley Hough I don't.

Bud: You must remember that.

Allen: The name rings a bell. You say she taught?

Bud: Yes, she taught at UB.

Allen: What did she teach?

Bud: Dental Hygiene. She was a dental hygienist.

Allen: O.K.

Bud: She married, Dave Howard. I think her name was Bev Howard when she taught here.

Allen: O.K. And then your memories of Campus Thunder.

Bud: That was probably among the brightest memories. This was a labor of love, Campus Thunder.

Allen: Were you in it?

Bud: I was in it, John Cox was in it, Ben Gallucci, John Saccone, Fred Flynn, who later became Trustees, Geri Bennett whom you mentioned before. This was an all original show, usually written, produced and directed by Al Dickason. The music was written by Steve Martin, (?). Vic Swain wrote some of the music. Vic was the first graduate of the University of Bridgeport. The orchestra was conducted by Gus Myers and (?) was his sister and she was the pianist, the accompanist. We put this whole thing together in six weeks in the fall, and when it was started, it started out as a disaster and even dress rehearsals, sometimes were a disaster. For instance in 1949, Al had a number of calls for Garden of the Gods and the scene opened up with a mountainous area and these gods were all perched on various peaks, and at the time it was appropriate to put a spot light on them. They had beautiful costumes, they were absolutely gorgeous, the only thing was, when you hit them with the light, they became transparent and everything underneath was unveiled. This was the night before the show was to go on, they found out about it. There were always some of these things, really. You worked to three o'clock in the morning, and when you had a class at eight o'clock the next morning, you were not given any time off for good behavior or for participating in this, and it turned out to be an excellent show. It was compared to Mask & Wig, Hasty Pudding and

it was written up in all the papers, up and down the coast. Al Dickason had access to the Shubert's and a lot of the costumes came from the Shubert family in New York. It was a beautiful spectacle, it really was. The highlight of it was Madame Fifi, and the Thunderettes.

Allen: How did this get started?

Bud: It was featured in the first show. It was a thing that Al came up with and it was eight guys dressed in women's clothes, and the leader was Madam Fifi. The first Fifi was later to become a trustee of the university and president of his own company, Dan Greaney. Also we had Shelly Rose took over in the second year from Dan. We had a geni who opened every show, and there were some real dedicated people. Tom and Mary Pirrillo. I don't know whether you remember Mary, but Mary was a gal from Bridgeport, came from a very modest income family.

End of Side one.

Side two of tape.

Bud: He worked the second shift at Warnaco in order to put his son through college, but Mary wanted to be part of this, so she became part of Campus Thunder, and she would come down to rehearsal until about 10 o'clock at night, he would work from 3 to 10, and then come down to rehearse and do her home work right then and there. I don't they ever got any sleep during those six weeks. But became, But Jerry Wilken, Stu Baker, (?) and Don Jones and we had Joyce Kalm, later on. Jerry Cambia, Jerri Bennett. All really took part in the Campus Thunder.

Allen: I have all the scores in the library. There has been some talk among some of the alumni of doing a reprise of one of the shows.

Bud: It will never happen.

Allen: Incidentally, Bert Arthur told me the other day, that he had given about 30 8 track tapes of the opening night of each of the opening nights of Campus Thunder and I can't locate them. Any idea what happened to them?

Bud: Yeah, Betty Jensen wiped them out and they are in the Attic of Cortright Hall.

Allen: She wiped them out? Whereabouts in the attic? The last time I was up there, stuff was all over the place. I started doing a triage on it, but it has been an awful mess and I have not had time to finish it.

Bud: I don't know what the story is. (?) There was a closet on

the third floor, there was office right next to it, they were in there, but Betty Jensen wiped them all out so they won't be any good anyway.

Allen: Why did she do that?

Bud: She did it accidentally. but she wiped them out.

Allen: Alright, now you, we talked earlier before we started taping, about the argument as to who the first fraternity was on campus. You say it was Theta Sigma and I say it might have been Sigma Phi Alpha. What is your recollection?

Bud: I think the convention, Sigma Phi Alpha probably was initiated first, in the sense that it was, that it had all the things together before TS did. But when the Board of Trustees, Theta Sigma was mentioned first and TS was really the first one that was chartered.

Allen: OK, I will go back and refresh my memories from the Board of Trustees Minutes on this and we will come up with -

Bud: It was the same day.

Allen: We say that the first graduate of UB was VIC Swain, did you know him as an undergraduate?

Bud: Vic already had a doctorate -

Allen: He wasn't quite a doctorate at this time. He went on to finish later in English.

Bud: I think he had a doctorate in music.

Allen: OK, that may be questionable.

Bud: Then he came back and started the English.

Allen: He was a graduate of the Junior College where the class characteristics said that his nickname was "Giggles".

Bud: Yeap. And then Vic came back, I think he graduated in, let's see, the University was started in 1947, I think Vic graduated in January 1948 with a bachelor's degree. He had so many credits from his earlier undergraduate work, that he was the first graduating class. [Swain had a Mus.B.]

Allen: In the notes here you have the Society of the Schmoo. I have quite a hit on it, but were you a part of it?

Bud: Not really. I was around it a lot, but I really wasn't part of it.

Allen: Ben Raubvogel was President. What ever happened to Ben?

Bud: I have no idea. The last I knew he was living in Miami.

Allen: I have his father's address, I will look him up and see what we can do on that.

Bud: There was Jackie Keefe, Ben, Joan Reck, I know Joan and Jackie went down to NY and were on a radio show with, oh what was his name? Henry Morgan. And Henry came up to the University along with Al Capp, the night the Schmoo was picked up nationally.

Allen: And then it became an incorporated organization, and then I don't know, I guess it just died out.

Bud: Well again, I think, you know, you have to understand the times in an historical sense, and after WWII, because of the dearth of manufacturing in the early 40s there wasn't really much to be had by people. They needed something to believe in, and the Schmoo filled that thing. The Schmoo was odorless, colorless, tasteless, he could turn himself into a porkchop, if you were hungry, he was your pillow if you wanted to sleep, he was your friend if you needed a companion, and it was a symbol of hope to people. It meant that the world was going to get better. You know, when they did get better, then there was no need for the Schmoo any more. You had the other things now, you refrigerators and your cars, and washing machines, and you could get whatever you wanted, so you didn't need the Schmoo any more.

Allen: The Scribe during these years, both when you were a student and subsequently?

Bud: The Scribe? when we were there, was in 46-50, dealt with student concerns. It didn't bother too much with politics, it didn't bother too much with national causes, it really took the role of being the instrument of disseminating information about students and student activities. There were gossip columns that, "Along Park Place" (which is now University Avenue), There was Foneyville Follies, it reported on the sports, . basketball baseball, soccer, it profiled faculty, profiled student leaders, and students, talked about the various organizations on campus, what they they were trying to do, listed their meetings, and how people could take part in them, and it was supervised, there was some one responsible for that, a faculty member. But basically it was a student paper, they had free reign to put things in. And Ev Matson, Jim Jackson, Bob Donaldson are the alums who put the paper together.

I think in later years, it took on a lot more issues which were not related to student activities, and became less of a student

newspaper and became more, almost a daily newspaper, you know, type of a daily newspaper, tried to report on too many things that students didn't relate to. Except their own personal biases.

Allen: Now the National Student Association, John Cox and others became active in that, what was the drive behind this, do you know?

Bud: Again I think it was just an ideal that came about. They were all in the same boat, pretty much, they went to the University of Wisconsin, and Brown University, or the University of Bridgeport or you went to any school, you were coming out after WWII, things in academia had been on hold for 4 or 5 years, I think they just wanted to get back in touch, and this was a way of doing it. It was a way of sharing mutual concerns across country. A group went out to national meetings at University of Wisconsin at Madison, I didn't go to that, but I did go to the one at Brown University, the next year, but basically it was an attempt to tie in with what was happening on various campuses across the country.

Allen: You mentioned "hang outs". Student hang outs in your day. You have S&S Grille, Where was that?

Bud: S&S Grille was on the corner of State and Seeley Streets.

Allen: OK. Zambori's,

Bud: Zambori's later became the Knickerbocker, later became Austin Street, and now is opening up again under new management. Just opened up this week as a matter of fact.

Allen: The Buffalo Club?

Bud: The Buffalo Club was over on Stratford Avenue, just over the bridge from the railroad station.

Allen: I don't recall that.

Bud: That was an after hours club. Faculty weren't allowed.

Allen: And Healey's Barn.

Bud: Healey's Barn was down on the campus -

Allen: That's about where the bookstore is now?

Bud: Right. And there were a lot of parties held there. A lot of fraternities and sorority parties were held there.

Allen: It has often been said that if Mrs. Healey never really

knew what went on in those.

Bud: I'm sure she didn't. And she turned out as many priests and nuns as she did.

Allen: Alright, I am, now you are getting back to something I want to come back to in just a little bit.

Bud: Well, these are just random thoughts.

Allen: And these are fine. Bud, you perhaps have more knowledge of what our graduates have done, and what they are doing now, than perhaps anyone else. I would like to have you recall some of the students that have been at the University during your period, and what they are doing now.

Bud: You mean during the '46-'50 years?

Allen: And in subsequent years. In other words, Tom Gerety, for example, came a little about after that, but he is a Superior Court Judge. McGrath is also a Superior Court Judge.

Bud: Rod Eilison.

Allen: Yes. I have often said that that I would never get a fair trial if I went before the Superior Court, because they couldn't find a judge that I hadn't had as a student. Alright, what I would like to do is remember some of these people and what they have done subsequently.

Bud: ~~Wish I had known this because I probably I am going to skip over an awful lot of good positions. What I may do is write some down as I think of them and send them to you.~~

Allen: OK, that would be great.

Bud: But, you know, I will try to do it by professions or occupations. Try to do it that way. I don't know whether you want to try it, or start out with business or what do you want to do.

Allen: Wherever you want to go. How you want to do it.

Bud: Well, there was Joel Siegal who was president of Baruch College in New York; (?) Greenberg who is the vice president of Montclair; you have, I can't think, we had two college presidents. Small colleges,

Allen: There was a guy by the name of Williams who got a Masters who is president of a small college down in Miami, who we gave an honorary degree to and whom I met the first time in June. And there was another fellow who was president of a Greek Sponsored

college.

Bud: No, he is no longer there, that was, he was president of (?), he was really a Greek Orthodox Priest.

Allen: Well, The name will -

Bud: Doesn't ring a bell. Then there was John Rassias, probably the most well know. Developed the system of teaching languages to the Peace Corps volunteers, had his own television show, has been on the Johnny Carson show and just about all the talk shows in the country.

In business you have the VP for Marketing for Jordache Jeans is Peter Felberbaum. Marty Rocks (?) who graduated in 1950, was president, first vice president of the May Company in Los Angeles. Fred (?) who graduated in 1950, is VP of Allied Stores. you have, many in business, probably too many to mention. In the local area here, you have Joe (?) of Bridgeport Machines, Bill Paul, who is the President of Sikorsky. You have Northeast Manufacturing Company is Arman (?), the VP of Sikorsky is Bob Zincone, and also Colin, I think it is Kelley, but I am not sure that is right, you have (?) in Los Angeles, is Roger (?), VP of IBM Learning Systems is Sam Franco; As I say, this is a toughy, because, Like you say, I know a lot of them, and Ed Gerety is another. Ed was at White Sands Proving Grounds in New Mexico and was responsible for testing all the vehicles that the astronauts used. And testing the effects of the vehicles on the astronauts.

And of course you have a guy like Mike Balzano, Mike was an illiterate garbage man, literally, who went to, A UB prof met him, he became an optometrist, got his HS diploma, graduated and went on to and got his doctorate at Georgetown. He later became Director of the Peace Corps.

(?) was head of media at the Department of Health Education and Welfare. Freddie Biebel has been very involved with the Republican Party and has been responsible for arranging the two inaugurations that Reagan has had.

Allen: He was also Chairman of the Republican Party.

Bud: No Vice Chairman. You have almost every dental hygiene clinic in the area is with Fones Graduate. We have the President of Wilson College down in Pennsylvania. She and her husband -

Allen: Pat Cormier.

Bud: Yeah. (?) You have, let's see. (Lot of mumbling). Well, that's it. If you had told me, I would have written them down.

Allen: If you can make some notes on this, and send them along, I would appreciate it.

Bud: I will.

Allen: And then of course there was my son in law, Lee Harry, who won the Oscar for "Button, Button", and so forth.

You have been the, as any good Alumni Director, a lover of the University. And what are some of your most happy, rewarding experiences? Who do you remember most fondly?

Bud: I think it would be John Cox. You know we met at UB and we became very, very close friends. And were for a long time. I think the thing that attracted me, the thing I always sold the University on was, it was not a place where the faculty was isolated from students. This is what made it unique. You go to a Yale, or Brown, I went up to Brown when I was a Junior College Student, and had a lecture that had 1500 students in it. And it broke up into discussion groups of 125. Needless to say, with 125 you couldn't do anything. UB had a concern about the subject, you could go to the classroom and talk to him about it, if you didn't understand something, you could sit down over a cup of coffee in the snack bar, or out on the grass or out in the park or anywhere at all, in his office, sometimes even, and resolve the problem, I think again, because of the size of it, you could be as active as you wanted to be. Much went on after class. A large amount of the learning took place outside of class. In the beginning it was almost all commuter students. later you had a lot of dormitory students. I don't know what the capacity was, but we had over 1000 of them. [well over 2000]. So really the whole atmosphere changed, yet it didn't change, because it was not unusual for some to stay in the dorms over night. It remained a friendly place. I think that some of the friendships last a lifetime. You are not just a number, you are a person. That was good.

I think of some of the faculty that I have had, and have known over the years. It has to be Dean Ropp and Dean Scurr. They helped me a great deal, you know Bob Mayhew, yourself, and others were there too. I think over the years, people like Jim Tucci in the Physics Department, people like Fred (?) in English, people like van der Kroef. Al Wolff was one who held the place together. (Much not clear). (Seemed to talk about some one whom Al Wolff saved and was now a partner in a very prestigious law firm in NY. But really it was all attributed to Al Wolff, and that is the kind of person you had here.

(Again not clear) But Mullings seems to stand out. When you put some professor on a very personal level at some point, it made a difference.

Allen: Yes, I have been told that by many people, and it is very ego massaging. I am sure, too, Bud, that you remember some funny things that have happened over the years.

Bud: (Not Clear) Something about dickies.
(Again, not clear). You had so many (?) and how can you describe that? I keep in touch with a lot of the players from '68 on.

Allen: OK, we were reminiscing about funny things. Something that suddenly occurred to me, we had a countewrfeiter of fifty cent pieces, remember that?.

Bud: He used substitute materials and the government wanted to know how he did it. And this is how he didn't go to prison.

Allen: We had one guy who burned down his girl friend's house and then went out to the west coast and became a bank robber. They finally caught him.

Bud: He is up in McNeil Island prison in Washington.

Allen: Have we had any other bad apples?

Bus: We have had a couple of disbarred lawyers. No I think you are going to have a percentage of that. But (?) UB was a great leveler. There were some very wealthy students who came to UB and some who were poor. But once they were on campus, you wouldn't know the difference. And I recall one gal who, I don't think she ever wore anything on campus except overalls and gym clothes until Friday afternoon. Friday, a chauffeured limousine would come up from NY and she would come out her furs and her diamonds and everything else, and hop in the car and went home. So really, Monday to Friday she was a regular student.

Let's See, funny things. Probably off color, but probably the best actor in the early days was (?) we had an English teacher by the name of Faye Jones, who was on the scale of 1-10 in popularity, she was minus 4 with the students. And Al Dickason wrote a very dramatic play called "Dinner in Black". You remember? Were you there opening night? Well, at one point, (?) was on stage in sport jacket and slacks, had to go out to make a quick change, then he comes back on and the curtain opens up and Faye Jones played the part of his wife, and slowly noticed (?) it was all students that night, (?) and his fly was open. (?) She was laughing.(?).

Oh, the Sociology class used to go on field trips quite often. And Roucek took us down to Harlem, we went to the Abyssinian Baptist Church, and down in Greenwich Village, because Joe taught a night Course at The New School for Social Research, and Joe used to come over and Scoff any food he wanted, so he came in one

night, and we had a gal, and I wont mention her name, for fear that it might be published, at any rate, Joe came in, he was too cheap to buy anything, so he just went around to everybody's plate and started to scoop whatever he wanted on to a clean plate, he brought along with him, put it down in front of him. And this gal walked up to him and put it on the floor and said, If you are going to be a pig eat like one.

I think, one of the things that we haven't talked about, the effects of Arnold College on UB. I think this is pretty important, I really do. Arnold became part of UB in 1953. This alumni group, there is an awful lot of money in it, and there is an awful lot of loyalty, (?) [held reunions for the Arnold Group.] The class of '23 had Lydia Pinkham's Pink Pills. And now Arnold is no longer a part of it. As far as alumni are concerned, they have a reunion every year, and they turn out 125 on up and they come from as far away as England. And they are a very loyal group.

Allen: I am glad you remembered that because -

Bud: About Dr. Ropp. - The College I graduated from no longer exists, it was the Arts and Science and now it is the Arts and Humanities. And I think this hurt a lot of Alumni, the fact that the colleges have changed. (?). They have lost an identity. Probably from an economic point of view it was a necessity, but I think it hurt the fund raising of the University.

Allen: Something that I have always wondered about, Bud. We never really organized the classes by years. Why was that, do you know?

Bud: I think we never really had the staff to do it. You have to understand that most of the time I was the Alumni operation. (? I haad some football coach or basketball coach, but they were really part time workers. To do that means that you have to get out and do a lot of hustling in the field. I had all the day to day things to answer, all the nitty gritty things that had to be done.

Allen: It didn't have anything to do with the fact that there were two graduations a year?

Bud: No I don't think so. If they put this down as a priority, it could have been accomplished. It is also broken down to the MBA Association, then the Law School Alumni Association. Then they wanted the area clubs. they had some saluatory effect, but unless you have (?), I don't think we are ever going to get an effective alumni club. (?) Other than coming in once a year to have a cocktail and hors oervres and meet the President. We seem to offer a one way ticket to them. And send a letter afterwards

asking for money. That was the wrong way to do it. I agree with you, there should be a closer class organization. And have an agent for the class. A lot of it, I used to go through the papers on Sunday, and every day, and clip out about UB alumni. Wew also had a clipping service.

Allen: In effect you were the secretary for all of the classes. And I was thinking of the way it was done at Yale.

Bud: You have to understand that being the alumni Director at UB you have to be a part time fund raiser, part time alumni relations director, part time advisor. And then you also had to worry about fraternities and sororities (?) And then there were visitors. There were at least three or four people a week coming back, or passing through. That took time.

Allen: I am quite active on the committee for my 45th reunion. Something that our class is starting at Yale. Berkeley College at Yale will be the home base in the reunion, so the Master of the College has made one of the rooms available for luncheon meetings each month. The idea of getting people back and getting them back in the swing of things. Strengthening the ties.

Bud: When I lived in Woodbury, one of the men there graduated from Yale, 19, I think it was 1912. (?) He hired a bus and went out to one of the restaurants and had lunch. (?). I know again, Marcia Buell's father was very active. (?) I know how much it meant to him.

Allen: Well, Bud, this has been a delightful bit of reminiscing. I have enjoyed it tremendously, and you have given me a lot of good information, and I hope you have enjoyed it too.

Bud: I did. (?)

Allen: That would be great, because somewhere along the line I want to -

Bud: You should be able to get a lot of that from the Alumni office.

END OF TAPE.